SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Madam, my first supplementary is, according to the Supreme Court verdict, 33 per cent of forest cover is necessary to keep the ecological balance in a State. And it is scientific too. But the forest cover in Assam is above 36 per cent of the total land. Why did the Assam Government evict the peasantry from the forest land which it has occupied for the last several decades? What is the reaction of the Union Government to this matter?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Madam, the Government of India's policy is to have one-third forest cover for ecological balance. For that purpose, a policy has been worked out and it is going in the right perspective. As far as Assam is concerned, the Central Government and the State Government are taking proactive measures. There is no need for any apprehension in this regard.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Madam, my second supplementary is this. In reply to (b) part of my question, he says that the Government issued detailed guidelines for conversion of all forest villages in the country into revenue villages on 18th September, 1990. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what those guidelines are. I know that in Assam such forest villages are not converted into revenue villages. What are the reasons? What are the guidelines?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Madam, the salient features of the guidelines are forest villages may be converted into revenue villages; the area to be converted include original *patta* for habitation and cultivation plus common facilities like roads, schools, creamation grounds, etc. These are the basic features of the guidelines.

Collaboration in scientific and technological fields

*267. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:††
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an agreement between India and Italy has been entered into to pave the way for enhancement of collaboration in scientific and technological fields;

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††The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati N.P. Durga.

(b) whether Government are also thinking of networking of scientific research laboratories and academia from both India and Itlay; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir, a S&T Agreement between India and Italy has been entered into on November 28, 2003.

(b) The new agreement aims to network scientific research laboratories and academia from the two countries for sharing human, financial and research facilities through various modes of cooperation including joint research and technology development projects, joint research centres/ laboratories and utilization of advanced research facilities.

(c) A beginning in this direction has been made by India-Trento Programme for Advanced Research (ITPAR) sponsored by Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italian Province of Trento & Indian DST. ITPAR involves project based two-way mobility of researchers through Bose-Romagnosi Fellowship and the Strengthening of experminetal research facilities in areas of Microsystems, Physics and Material Sciences, Tele-communication and Computer Sciences.

SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Madam, I fail to understand the reason behind the signing of this agreement because an agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Italy had already been signed in 1978. That agreement, apart from covering cultural and economic cooperation, is also dealing with scientific collaboration. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what the reasons are for entering into a fresh agreement with Italy, when similar agreements on science and technology exist. How does the agreement recently entered into facilitate scientific collaboration with the European Union?

श्री बची सिंह रावत: उपसभापति महोदया, 1978 में इंडिया-इटली साइंस एंड टेक्नोलॉजी का एक समझौता हमारे बीच में था और उसको बदलने की आवश्यकता इसलिए पड़ी कि पहले हमें विभिन्न कार्यक्रमों के लिए ज्वाइंट कमेटी ऑन इकॉनामिक कोऑपरेशन के माध्यम से

जाना पड़ता था और उसके कारण काफी विलंब होता था। आई.टी.पी.ए.आर. के मामले में कि किस तरीके से तय किया जाए और इसके अलावा जो ज्वाइंट रिसर्च लेबोरेटरीज़ थीं, उनके संबंध में भी कोई स्पष्टता उसमें नहीं थी। उसका माध्यम यह ज्वाइंट कमेटी ऑन इकानॉमिक कोऑपरेशन था और इसलिए अब दोनों ही देशों के बीच में इस एग्रीमेंट को करने का निर्णय किया गया है।

SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Madam, I would like to know from the hon. Minister how the joint projects are going to be promoted from the point of view of funding, technological transfer, etc. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether any committee or task force has been set up with representatives from both the countries to oversee the implementation of scientific programmes and whether similar kind of scientific agreements have been entered into with any other country. If the answer is yes, please give the details thereof.

श्री बची सिंह रावत: उपसभापति महोदया, इस समझौते को मिलाकर भारत के 62 देशों के साथ वैज्ञानिक समझौते हुए हैं। यह समझौता जो 28 नवंबर, 2003 को दिल्ली में हुआ है, इसमें चार प्रोजेक्ट्स सामने रखे गए हैं-एक है कंप्यूटर साइंस जो कि टाटा इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ फंडामेंटल रिसर्च के माध्यम से होना है। दूसरा, टेली कम्युनिकेशन्स का आई.आई.टी., मुम्बई के साथ, तीसरा, माइक्रो सिस्टम आई.आई.टी., खड़गपुर और चौथा, मैटीरियल साइंस का जो युनिवर्सिटी ऑफ हैदराबाद के साथ होना है। इसके अलावा इसमें एक प्रावधन रखा गया है बोस-रोमागनोसी फैलोशिप का। इसमें 16 फैलोशिप हमारे द्वारा दी जानी हैं और 16 फैलोशिप इटली के द्वारा दी जानी हैं। वे यूरो में अपना भुगतान करेंगे---1500 यूरो और हमारी ओर से 15 हजार रुपए फेलोशिप के रूप में दिए जाएंगे। हमारे बीच में जो फंडिग की व्यवस्था है, वह बराबरी के स्तर पर है कि उतनी फंडिंग उनकी ओर से होगी, उतनी फंडिंग हमारी ओर से होगी। अभी तक इसमें 35 रिसर्च पेपर्स ज्वाइंटली पब्लिश किए गए हैं और ह्यूमिडिटी सेंसर टेक्नोलॉजी को पेटेंट कराने के लिए फॉलोअप किया जा रहा है इंडियन एसोसिएशन ऑफ कल्टिवेशन ऑफ साइंस कलकत्ता के द्वारा। इस प्रकार इसमें प्रगति ठीक चल रही है।

श्री दत्ता मेघे: महोदया, मैं आपके माध्यम से यह पूछना चाहता हूं कि इस समझौते के अंतर्गत विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी तथा कम्प्यूटर विज्ञान में जो मदद की जा रही है, इसमें एक सरकार से दूसरी सरकार की मदद की जाएगी या जो निजी संस्थाएं हैं उनको भी इसमें शामिल किया जाएगा?

श्री बची सिंह रावत: अभी ऐसा कोई प्रस्ताव है नहीं, यदि कोई प्रस्ताव आएगा तो उस पर अवश्य विचार किया जाएगा।